

INDIA AND  
SOUTHERN ASIA



JAMES M. THOBURN

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# INDIA AND SOUTHERN ASIA

*By*

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# India and Southern Asia

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## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTORY.

THE closing decade of the fifteenth century was marked by two events of surpassing importance to the human race. The first was the discovery of America by Columbus, and the second the discovery of the passage around the Cape of Good Hope by Vasco de Gama. The first has attracted the greater attention, especially among the new nations which have grown up in America; but it may be doubted whether in its ultimate effects upon the whole human race the achievement of Columbus was more important than the discovery of his Portuguese rival. The one brought the existence of two great continents to the knowledge of Europe, while the other opened a

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highway to a region as vast in extent as the two Americas combined, and containing a population larger than that of all the rest of the world. India had been known as a distant land of semi-fable, China as a still more remote land of mystery, while Japan had not given the Western world a passing thought; but all this was changed when Europe learned that the sea offered a free passage to every adventurer who wished to visit those distant shores, and soon rival nations were hastening to the vast regions which had thus been opened to them as a field of commerce and conquest.

The opening of the sixteenth century was a little too early for enlightened missionary work, but the Roman Catholic leaders of that period were quick to perceive that India presented such a field for the extension of the Pope's authority as had never been seen before. They lost no time in preparing to enter what seemed to them a providential inheritance, and under the leadership of the illustrious Xavier a work of vast proportions was undertaken, but this movement was not very successful. The governments of the day also took an inter-

est in the enterprise, but their efforts all ended in failure, and seemed only to demonstrate the fact that neither civil nor military powers could be successfully entrusted with spiritual functions. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries some progress was made, chiefly through the agency of good men who had gone out to India as chaplains, but the real beginning of the modern missionary movement dates from the noted call of William Carey,—a call from God which was direct and specific, and which was followed by similar calls on both sides of the globe, until in the fullness of time the Christian Churches of Europe and America became fully and definitely committed to this vast enterprise, and their combined efforts became known as one of the greatest movements of modern times. Every important Church is now committed to this sacred cause, so that every year the fields which are cultivated expand and the prospects which open to the view become more hopeful and inviting.

The Methodist Episcopal Church was somewhat late in entering the foreign field, chiefly because of the overwhelming de-

mand of the constantly growing work along the frontiers in the home-land, but when a beginning in India was at last made in 1857, God did not fail to give special tokens of approval to this new movement, and it rapidly gained a strong hold upon the affections and interest of the whole Methodist community in the United States. God richly blessed the efforts of His messengers to India, and very soon it was clearly perceived that this movement was adding to the general interest of the Church in other fields. In short, the effort to give the Gospel to the people of India led to inquiries concerning the needs of other portions of the vast non-Christian world, and thus helped forward the greater effort to which Christians of every name are summoned,—to make our earth “one great garden of our God.”

In the following brief pages no attempt is made to lay before the reader anything more than an exceedingly brief outline of the field which the Church is trying to occupy, and of the work which is to be accomplished. This work constitutes a well-defined task, and like every task to which

God summons His people, is perfectly feasible, and can be—and must be—crowned with complete success. The Church of the present day does not sufficiently appreciate either her opportunities or her responsibilities. Golden days are passing, and golden opportunities escaping our grasp, chiefly for the reason that our people do not understand the conditions of Christ's service, or the splendid victories which are within easy grasp of those who bear the name of the blessed Master, and follow in His victorious footsteps.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE REGION CALLED "INDIA."

IN speaking of India it has often been remarked that the region bearing that name is more like a continent than a single country. It has been likened to Europe, with Russia excluded from the map, and contains no less than 1,766,597 square miles of territory. Its soil is for the most part extremely fertile, and its productions include almost everything found between the Arctic Circle and the Equator. The great valley of the Ganges is as rich as that of the Nile, and is ten times as extensive. From the Himalayas to the sea the river flows through a vast plain which has been cultivated as far back as history can be traced, without showing any signs of exhaustion, and which still yields a support for a hundred million souls. Other portions of the country are equally fertile, and although an arid and almost desert

region exists in a part of the Northwest, yet this is much more limited in extent than similar sections in the United States. On the whole India may be regarded as a goodly land, and one which must always be regarded as the home of one of the great divisions of the human race.

A mistaken notion prevails in the outer world concerning the climate of India. Like all other climates, that of India is less than perfect, but as happens in all other parts of the world, many of the ailments of the people can be traced to other sources than its climate. The population is dense, the mass of it exceedingly poor, the ordinary dwellings small and unsanitary, the food oftentimes insufficient, and the medical notions of the people as often hurtful as helpful to both those in health and the sufferers from sickness. Europeans can enjoy good enough health in India if they care sufficiently for the blessing to take a few simple precautions, and live as intelligent Christians ought to do in any and all parts of the world. Asiatic cholera originated in India, it is true, but scarlet fever and diphtheria did not, and

it is doubtful if either of these scourges has ever gained a lodgment in the empire.

Many persons of the United States have in some way imbibed the notion that the chief food staple of the people of India is rice, but this too is a very great mistake. Rice is produced in immense quantities along the sea coast and in the large valleys, but the chief food of the people taken as a whole is millet, of which there are several varieties. Millions of the people are too poor to eat rice. Maize of an inferior quality is grown and eaten to some extent by the poorer classes in certain sections. Wheat is not only grown, but exported in large quantities. Cotton is an Indian product, and it seems both probable and certain that it was in India that cotton fabrics were first produced. If Egypt excelled in weaving her fine linen, India can claim precedence in putting cotton goods on the markets of the world. It was the town of Calicut, in Southwestern India, that first gave the name "calico" to the cotton fabric which has become so well known throughout the world.

Tea is grown high up among the Hima-



aya Mountains, and also in the extreme South among the hills. Coffee is exported both East and West, and is also sent to Arabia, where it is mixed with the Arabian berry, and re-exported to Europe and America as the "best Mocha coffee." Indigo was an important production of the country until the discovery of aniline dyes weakened and practically destroyed the commerce in that article. Sugar is a valuable article of export, and India may claim the credit of having given the world both the product and the name which it bears. In short, India has a fair proportion of the good things of this life, and instead of being one of the beggar nations appealing to the outer world for help, she stands in the world's market-place with her wares, and is prepared to sell, buy, or exchange on terms which all the world must respect. If her markets were suddenly to be closed, the whole civilized world would feel the shock, and all nations would be obliged to readjust themselves to the new situation.

The people of India differ in race characteristics, but have certain peculiarities

in common. They are known throughout the world as tenaciously attached to the caste system, by which the whole community is divided into separate castes or orders, ranking from the most highly privileged to the lowest outcasts. This system is the source of much oppression, and makes it nearly impossible for the lower classes to rise in the social scale, or to enjoy the full exercise of those rights which belong in common to the whole human race. The rules of caste also make it very difficult for any one to change the religion in which he is born, and of course stand directly in the way of missionary work. The invasion of the country by the Mohammedans many years ago gave a severe blow to the system of caste, but failed to destroy it, and it remains as a special duty of the Christian missionary to accomplish this gigantic task. That the work will finally be accomplished no missionary who has studied the situation can for a single moment doubt.

India is a rich country, but the mass of its people are wretchedly poor. The depth of poverty to which the masses have sunk

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is almost incredible, but their lot is not worse than that of all the non-Christian people on the globe. A very few people are moderately well-to-do, but millions upon millions live constantly upon the ragged edge of starvation. Able-bodied men are glad to obtain employment at from five to eight or ten cents a day. The missionary is sometimes tempted to despair of success when he considers the utterly helpless condition of the people among whom he labors, but he is a messenger of hope to the most lowly people of earth, and goes among them with a promise for the life which now is, as well as for that which is to come. The world will only be saved from its poverty when all its nations learn to obey God.

The rivers of India are not among the longest in the world, but they pour an immense volume of water into the sea. The Indus, Ganges and Brahmaputra are noble streams and serve the double purpose of promoting internal commerce, and providing water for the vast system of irrigating canals which the Government has been constructing during recent years.

Visitors from Europe and America who are familiar with the use of railways and steamers for the purpose of commerce are slow to appreciate the fact that the Ganges carries a larger internal commerce on her bosom than does the Mississippi. The larger canals are also used for purposes of transportation of goods and grain and are of inestimable value to the people.

On the whole the people of India may well be pardoned for regarding their country as one of the most favored regions of the globe. If it were not an especially favored land it would not be—and could not be—what it is, the home of nearly one-fifth of the human race.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE EMPIRE.

MANY great kingdoms rose and fell in Indian history, but it was not until the reign of Akhbar in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that any one power gained such authority over all rivals as to become the predominant factor in the whole Indian peninsula. This noted monarch was truly a great man and before his death had become the most powerful ruler on the globe. Several of his successors did much to maintain the high position which he had won for the Moghul race, but the elements of weakness which seem in so many cases to have been inherent in the character of Oriental rulers soon appeared in successive monarchs at Delhi and Agra—the great capitals of the Moghul era—and it was reserved for a new power, hailing from a small island in a distant sea, to unite firmly and permanently all the great sec-

tions of the region known as "India," and to establish an empire such as the world had never seen before the dawn of the nineteenth century.

The coming of the English to India was an extraordinary event. It was no part of any human plan, and was distant as the poles from any human intention. A few adventurers sought the distant shores of an almost unknown land for the purpose of trade, and took up a temporary residence there without any thought of making a lengthy stay. Temporary arrangements were made, and the authority of local rulers was acknowledged with a respect which amounted to almost slavish submission. But the trade increased, the allurements of the situation began to be felt, the weakness of the local potentates was discovered, and thus in time the traders became soldiers; battles were fought, the bubble of Oriental power burst, and the adventurers saw before them a straight path leading to conquest, fabulous wealth, and almost unlimited power.

The story need not be told at length. Suffice it to say that a commercial body

known as the "East India Company," was founded and organized, and by successive steps developed into a mighty Oriental empire, and in the fullness of time the present King-Emperor of England went out to India, and in the royal city of Delhi, on the first day of January, 1877, he proclaimed Queen Victoria as Empress of a region which might almost be said to embrace all Southern Asia. No such realm had been known in that part of Asia before, and only one other empire in the whole world can compare with this in either population or power to-day. Making allowance for the normal increase since the last official census was taken in 1900, the present population of the Indian Empire may be reckoned at three hundred millions. China alone in all the world can compare with this empire in point of population, but to-day, in all the elements of political and military power, China is distinctly a second-rate nation, and can not claim a place above her rival in Southern Asia.

The people of India are not a conquered people. The English never conquered India. As has been said before, a

few English merchants entered the land as traders, and kept a few soldiers as local guards. The soldiers were employed merely for protection and to preserve order locally, but in time it was discovered that Oriental troops could not stand against them. Then the work of expansion began, but in the main Indian soldiers were employed against Indians, and in time Indian princes were found fighting for the strangers, and thus by using the forces found in the land the power of the adventurers steadily increased. District was added to district, and province to province until at last the whole vast region from Afghanistan to Siam was brought under the flag of England. The leaders from the first in this stupendous movement have been Englishmen, but more than three-fourths of the common soldiers have been children of the Indian soil.

The question is often asked, "What would the result be if the Russians were to attempt to invade India? Could the English put an army in the field which would be at all able to cope with the immense forces which the Russians could bring



down from Central Asia?" The Indian Government could assemble two hundred thousand European, and five hundred thousand Indian soldiers in the field on short notice, and with the tremendous bulwark which the vast Himalayas form on the Northwest frontier, the forces of the Indian Empire would be able to hold the famous passes through which Alexander marched long centuries ago, not only against the Russians, but against the world!

India, though subject to British control, is an empire in herself and is entitled to this distinction among the great powers of the world. If not independent, she is not subject to despotic control, and is endowed with many of the elements of self-government. If it be said that this privilege can be curtailed at any time, it is sufficient to reply that in the ordinary course of administration it seldom meets with a check from the home authorities. A supreme legislative body under the presidency of the Viceroy himself makes laws for the Empire, while similar bodies under the presidency of Governors and Lieuten-

ant-Governors legislate for sections of the Empire in which interests of a more local character require attention. Courts of law of every grade are provided to which every subject—even the lowest—can appeal. It is claimed by those capable of forming an opinion on the subject that the criminal code of India, drawn up by Lord Macaulay, is the best code of its kind known in the world. Only those who are familiar with the conditions which prevail in Oriental nations can fully appreciate the amazing spectacle which this array of open and just courts must present, not only to the people of India, but to all the races of the Orient.

The principle of religious toleration has been incorporated into law throughout the Empire, and forms a great bulwark to the missionary movements of the present era. The rule just mentioned necessarily includes the toleration of polygamy and certain other customs repugnant to Christian people, but those best acquainted with the situation are convinced that a sudden and violent attempt to reconstruct a society embracing three hundred million people, on a

model provided by the most advanced society in the world, would not only end in failure, but inevitably lead to disastrous confusion, and probably to much suffering and bloodshed. The final readjustment of society on a Christian model is by no means yet complete in Christian lands, and wise men instinctively perceive that this is a work which must be left to the quiet progress of Christian influences.

From time to time both in England and America earnest reformers may be heard asking why the British Government does not abolish child marriage and polygamy, but such questions always indicate a very slight and superficial knowledge of the conditions which prevail in lands where Christian laws and Christian influences do not prevail. Missionaries find it exceedingly difficult to deal with these subjects in the case of the few converts who gather around them, and the most powerful government in the world could not at a stroke change the ideals and usages of three hundred millions of people, especially when both these ideals and usages have become identified and interwoven with their religious and

traditional usages. No government in the world—I repeat—could accomplish a task so vast and complicated.

Will India ever become an independent power, and, as such, take her place among the nations of the earth? This question is sometimes asked by persons who are disposed to study present conditions, but the subject is—and for many years must be—more speculative than practical. When all conditions are fully ripe events sometimes move with startling rapidity, but at the present time only a few of the conditions required for a change are existent. The people are fettered by caste, separated by discordant religious beliefs, aliens to one another in race, and without leadership, either military or civil. It will be time enough to discuss a question of this kind when the millions of the Empire shall have all become Christians, and when the nations of the earth shall have learned another method of settling differences than in the arena of the battlefield. For the present it is sufficient to know that for many long years to come the bond which united India to the British people must remain unbroken.

The boundaries of India are more extended at the present time than they have ever been before, while the "spheres of influence" beyond the actual boundary lines are also extended far beyond any similar regions in past times. The phrase "spheres of influence" is understood to mean that the Indian Government will not tolerate interference on the part of any foreign power in the affairs of the regions so designated. Among the tracts so considered at the present time may be included the whole of the eastern shore line of Asia, with parts of Central Asia and Tibet on the North. The whole of the Malay Peninsula, although it has not been annexed, is practically subject to orders from the Straits Government at Singapore, while Siam is carefully watched and parts of its territory protected from French encroachment. India is also becoming interested in East Africa, where large numbers of her people are now settling, and where in time the Empire may possibly acquire a permanent foothold.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE PEOPLE.

SO FAR as the people of India are concerned, the situation is not entirely unlike that in Europe. The people at large have certain points of resemblance which they hold in common, and by which they could be easily distinguished from the inhabitants of other parts of the globe, and yet among themselves they differ widely in matters of dress, language, and religion. In complexion all may be classed among the dark races, and yet in this respect too they differ widely; some being very dark and others comparatively fair.

Their origin is hidden in obscurity, save that most of them seem to have entered the country from the passes along the Northwest frontier. Tradition points unmistakably in this direction, and language also furnishes a clue which is generally accepted as conclusive, especially in regard

to those sections of the population belonging to the great Aryan family of mankind. It is generally conceded that the races known as Aryan and Dravidian entered the country by the well-known passes mentioned above, while other less prominent races, known by the general name of Kolarians, are supposed to have entered from the Northeast. However this whole subject is clouded in more or less obscurity. As a matter of fact we find seven distinct peoples whose languages show a marked affinity to the Germanic tongues of Europe, and hence the term "Indio-Germanic" is now accepted by the best authorities on subjects pertaining to the civilized languages. The people who are accepted as belonging to the Aryan division, are for the most part of a lighter complexion than the Dravidians and others, and no doubt entered the country at a later era than these darker peoples. It is generally accepted as certain that at the advent of the newcomers the people who had preceded them were driven southward and eastward by slow degrees, and finally became settled in those parts of the country where they

are now found. Thus invasion followed invasion, each family of strangers naturally driving their opponents before them, so that the late-arriving Aryans got possession of the northern portions of the country where they were found by the British, and which they still occupy. The Dravidians were driven southward by the Aryans and are now to be found in the southern part of the country, but as this general movement was gradual and by different routes distinct nationalities took shape and formed new languages and varieties of people.

The civilization of India at an early period assumed a distinct type of its own. Owing to the situation in which the people were placed, various divisions naturally were created, and these in time assumed the character of separate nations. The chief divisions or peoples belonging to the Aryan family are the Punjabi, Hindi (or Hindustani), Bengali, Oriya, Maharati, Gujarati, and Sindhi. The Dravidian peoples are represented by the Tamil, Telugu, Kanarese, and Malayan languages. The Kolarians are a much weaker people, and



are not represented by any strong national body. But in addition to all these more important peoples, a large number of minor tribes are to be found in the less civilized portions of the country, including many wandering clans who have developed separate languages and customs. The religion of these more primitive people, of course, is of a most primitive type. Little is known of their origin, and it would be useless to attempt to trace their movements beyond one or two of the latest generations.

Of the people of India as a whole, although it may be said that as a rule they bear the reputation of not being very warlike, they are less lacking in courage and independence of character than would be apparent at first glance to a stranger. A hundred times in their past history they have shown an aptitude for war second to that of scarcely any race on the globe. Even since the establishment of English rule in the country, they have time and again furnished great armies of brave and effective soldiers, sometimes fighting against the foreign powers, and on other

occasions fighting in its ranks. As a rule, however, they live in quietness in their simple villages, and are inoffensive when not molested or unjustly treated. The civilization of India is somewhat peculiar in that it seems to remain stationary. It neither advances nor declines. The simple farming implements now in use are not better than those employed by their ancestors one or two thousand years ago,—indeed in many cases they are identically the same. It is the same with the Chinese, and it might be added, is the characteristic of the whole non-Christian world. This inability to change, even in small particulars, never fails to impress the stranger arriving in India as a most remarkable trait. The enterprise of the human race is confined to the nations bearing the Christian name, or to those who by their peculiar circumstances have been brought into close contact with various Christian institutions.

The people of India are very poor. This remark also can be applied to all the nations outside the Christian pale. The word “poor” in this connection should be

understood in a very broad sense. They are not only poor, but extremely destitute of nearly all the comforts of life with which Europeans and Americans are familiar. The average income of a laboring man in good health and of normal strength does not exceed the sum of \$25 a year! This reference is, of course, to unskilled labor, but artisans earn correspondingly low wages. The simple food of the people is, of course, very cheap; but in circumstances even of comparative comfort the workingman can earn barely enough to afford two frugal meals a day, and oftentimes only a single one. In the mild climate of the country, of course, clothing need not cost much, and the other wants of the family are few indeed. There is something absolutely startling in the contemplation of one or two hundred million souls living at this dying rate, but such is the condition of uncounted millions of our poor race. If the Christian missionary carried with him no other gift to the vast millions of the non-Christian world than the simple knowledge of Christ, and of the common Father, he would still

give to the people to whom he goes a boon which would be worth more to them than all the gold and silver and other vast treasures of earth.

It need hardly be said that nothing at all equivalent to the American or European idea of education was known in India before the arrival of the Europeans, and especially before the advent of the Christian missionary. In the early days of the English power it did not occur to anyone that the people could be educated, or that they could ever rise above the low level in which they were found. The first missionaries not only suggested the possibility of a newer and higher ideal, but demonstrated the practicability of the same. It has now become abundantly evident that the people of India are capable of receiving an education of the highest quality, and that under favorable circumstances they will be able to compete successfully with Europeans of any and every class. They are not lacking in brain-power, and wherever an opportunity is afforded them, they make good progress and acquit themselves admirably.

The people of India are conservatives of the conservatives. In this respect they are like all Asiatics except the Japanese. They like the old because it is old, and shun the new because it is new. This peculiarity, of course, stands in the way of all progress, and is especially unfavorable to missionary success. But, on the other hand, this conservatism is not without its compensations. A willingness to seek change for its own sake is not a good omen of progress. There is a certain danger in attempting too much with newly enfranchised people, and in the long run it will very probably be found that by avoiding both extremes the missionaries have succeeded in finding a safe mean.

The people of India are for the most part a much more temperate people than the majority of Europeans. Some of the castes abstain almost wholly from intoxicants of all kinds, and it is a painful but true confession to make that intemperance spreads most rapidly among those people who are brought closely into contact with Europeans. In recent years attention has been called to the peril in which the young

are placed by bringing them up in full sight of liquor shops and drinking habits to which their forefathers had been complete strangers. The whole missionary body has taken up an attitude of unqualified hostility to the vice of intemperance, not so much for the purpose of reforming the people as of saving them from the need of a future reformation.

The opium habit has gained a hold upon some classes, but has by no means become a common vice among the people at large, and since the late pronounced stand taken against the traffic by the English Government, it is confidently hoped that an effective check can be administered to the further spread of this blighting evil. In all their efforts to promote moral reforms among the people, the missionaries are heartily supported by the leaders of native society.

The intellectual status of the Indian people is higher than is generally supposed by Europeans or Americans. In ability to acquire knowledge the youth of the country are quite the equals of the average European youths. The people of Bengal, who

are commonly regarded as physically weak and lacking in courage, take high rank in school and college, when permitted to compete for prizes with Europeans. A young man in Calcutta when undergoing an examination in the medical course, was found to be able to repeat the whole text book from memory. In like manner many young Bengalis show a remarkable proficiency in mathematics. The Tamil people—who dwell in the south, are said to have the best as well as the most extensive literature of any of the Indian races. But these special cases of proficiency must not be accepted as indications that the people dwelling in other sections of the Empire are lacking in mental power. As intimated above, the people of all the Indian races are more highly gifted intellectually than is supposed in Europe and America, and doubtless in the future will be abundantly able to hold their own in the severe competition which seems to await the nations of our world, when all unnatural barriers are broken down, and all the nations of our earth “flow together.”

The women of India share the disabili-

ties of their sex in all Asiatic countries in pretty full measure, and have done so since a very early age. Polygamy is common but by no means universal. In making marriage engagements no thought of consulting the young people ever occurs to anyone, and strangely enough in most cases the selection made by the parents seem to be satisfactory to the parties concerned. The enforced widowhood observed among the Hindus is a source of no little trouble, and is one of the worst features of the Hindu system. All who can afford it, seclude their females from the gaze of strangers, but at various points both the Hindus and Mohammedans are breaking through this restriction. In Calcutta, Madras and Bombay, and to a less extent in Lucknow and other cities of the interior, intelligent natives are sending their daughters to school, and in a large measure ignoring the demands of caste. Women and girls of the poorer classes work in the fields, and are seen in large numbers among the laborers who repair the public roads. They are used also as burden bearers, and this part of their work seems the most grievous,



because their loads are almost exclusively carried on their heads. Womanhood is at a discount in all the Oriental world and has been since time immemorial. India has simply followed the common procession. The ancient Hebrews excelled other Oriental people in the privileges which they accorded to their women, but the Moham-medans from the first have adopted wrong views, and in India have done nothing to elevate the status of the sex. But a better day has dawned, and already some splendid women have been raised up under the fostering spirit of Christian missions.

The barbarous cruelty of the Indian *suttee*—the custom of burning widows on the funeral pyre of their dead husbands,—has only ceased because English law has suppressed it. In very recent years instances of this revolting crime have been reported, and the participants punished, and there can be no doubt that in some sections of the Empire, a rapid increase of such instances would be seen if the strong arm of authority were withdrawn.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE RELIGIONS.

INDIA is somewhat famous for its religions, having developed the two great systems known as Buddhism and Hinduism, and meanwhile has provided the finest field for the active propagation of Mohammedanism to be found anywhere on the globe. The people of India, including all races and tribes, seem to have a peculiar religious temperament, and blank infidelity has never found a congenial soil in any part of the land. The scantiest records of the earliest ages indicate the presence of blind devotion to various forms of polytheism on the part of many, and of more intelligent nature worship on the part of the few more cultured persons.

The first Aryan invaders found a most degraded form of worship among the people of the land. Their objects of veneration and worship included snakes, mon-

keys, elephants, crocodiles and other creatures. Apparently they were attracted by the size and strength of the animal, or by its ferocity. Careful observers have often noted the fact that in much of the worship of people, especially of those of little cultivation, the grotesque element seems always to have a special attraction. No connected or intelligent idea of the religious beliefs of those early people can be obtained because of the scarcity of the records concerning them, but references to them and their customs are found in the writings of the early Aryans, giving us a general impression of their religion and degree of cultivation.

The early Aryans entered India at a period long before the rise of Buddhism, which is generally conceded to have taken place about six centuries before our era, and if this opinion is correct, it follows that the early Aryan writers must have flourished at a far earlier date. By all accounts they were men of simple but intelligent habits and ideals, and with a fair amount of culture. They were very much unlike the more superstitious and ignoble people who

represented the descendants of these first Aryans at the time of the rise of Buddhism.

The precise manner in which Brahmanism took its rise is not clearly known. It would seem, however, that there was a distinct and rapid decline in the character of the Aryan leaders. The order of Brahmans had no existence at the outset, but seems to have grown up by a gradual process, and, like priests in every age, these men learned the secrets of using religious veneration and authority as a means for their personal promotion. Perhaps the worst of all tyrannies is that of spiritual masters, and the success which the Brahmans achieved in their efforts to usurp authority has become well-known throughout the globe.

It is not probable that these men deliberately constructed the system which afterwards served so well to further their own interests and strengthen their authority, but like similar movements in all ages it was the result of influences some of which seemed harmless enough at the time. The various steps by which the earliest Aryan society was reorganized has been a

subject of much interesting study, especially since the writings of Max Müller were published forty odd years ago. Very naturally many writers as well as hosts of readers have been led into the mistaken notion that the simple nature worship of the early Aryans was one and the same in origin, and in most details, with the perfected system afterward known as Hinduism. This, however, is by no means clear. It is more probable that many centuries elapsed before modern Hinduism assumed the phases which it bore when the first Europeans came to the country. It need hardly be said that nothing could be more unlike the simple ideals cherished by the early Aryans in the Northwest, than the Hinduism which William Carey knew on the banks of the Hughli, or that Hinduism which the earliest Christian missionaries encountered when they landed in South India. The early Aryans were not polytheists, nor does it seem that they worshiped images of any kind. They revered the sun and moon, the mountains and rivers, and, of course, the mighty ocean. They ascribed a duty or office to each of

the great objects of nature. It does not appear that they adopted any special observances such as the worship of idols, or of serpents or of living creatures of any kind. In other words, there was a distinctly downward step taken by those who succeeded in transforming the simple faith of the Aryans into the somewhat repulsive cult known to-day as Hinduism.

In order to understand the character of Hinduism as it practically exists in India at the present time, the student must always bear in mind that the caste system forms an important—and it might almost be said a predominant—feature of the Hindu religion. It is frequently said by missionaries in reply to questions from strangers in the country, that the caste system is not a feature of the Hindu religion, though in practical life it is Hinduism itself. Nobody could be included within the pale of the religion who did not believe in and accept caste and pay scrupulous regard to all its rules. The out-caste is very much more than merely a person excluded from the bounds of polite society. In many respects he is treated as

a dead man. His punishment is not only bitter, but cruel. Caste is the chief bond which holds Hindu society together at the present time. Its influence permeates every section of society, and it is rigidly opposed to the ingress of all reforming or progressive agencies which may be brought into the country from the outer world.

But the situation is by no means as hopeless as the above statement of the case might indicate. Beyond all questions the bonds of caste have grown steadily weaker during the past generation. Very many of the more intelligent people of the land freely admit that the system rests like a great blight on the nation. The advance of education, of course, weakens its bonds, while the increasing intercourse of India with the outer nations of the earth is constantly felt in aid of every progressive enterprise. The shadow of the system may linger for many centuries, but its power is rapidly giving way, and the multitudes who belong to the lower grades of society are learning to breathe more easily than their ancestors were ever able to do.

As was mentioned on a preceding page,

Buddhism took its rise five or six centuries before the beginning of our era. Its founder was a notable man living in a part of the province now known as Oudh, and he is known to students by the various names of Gautama, Buddha, and Sakya Muni. By all accounts it would seem to be fairly well settled that he was an honest and able reformer. His methods doubtless seem strange to Western students, but all Oriental leaders of his class were entirely unlike the ideals formed by Europeans or Americans who make their observations from entirely modern points of view. Much uncertainty exists as to actual facts concerning the events of his life, but for some reason and in some way he succeeded in making an extraordinary impression upon all classes throughout the borders of the land. As a matter of fact the Brahmans opposed him bitterly and desperately, but it would seem that they had become intolerable to the common people on account of their tyranny, and the reformer touched a deeply popular chord when he preached against them and their extortionate ways. He probably deserves



all the praise that modern writers give him, but he did not prove fully equal to the great occasion which called him forth. He was supported by some of the reigning princes of the time, and he alone of all India's great religious leaders succeeded in making his influence to be felt in regions beyond the confines of his own land. Buddhist missionaries crossed over to Ceylon and preached successfully there, and, as all the world knows, some missionaries penetrated into Tibet and China and met with extraordinary successes there. In short, Buddhism took its place as one of the great religions of mankind, and although it ultimately failed to hold the ground it gained, yet the history of the movement will always furnish a fascinating story for the student.

An amazing discovery was made by a French traveler named Huc who visited Tibet nearly two generations ago. The traveler was a loyal Roman Catholic, and was exceedingly surprised to find that in many points the ritual which the Buddhists of Tibet observed, followed precisely the same routine which the Roman Catholics

observe in many of their services to-day. Attention was called to this subject by many writers, but up to the present time the assertions made by M. Huc have not been denied or challenged. A statement of the facts was published at Rome a dozen years ago by Bishop Burt, but there, as elsewhere, the Roman Catholic authorities declined to notice it. Stranger still, it was affirmed by the late Sir William Hunter, the leading historian of India, that the founder of Buddhism was actually canonized at Rome by one of the Popes of a past generation, and this statement, too, has failed to meet with any contradiction on the part of a Roman Catholic authority.

Much to the regret of students of Indian history, very little can be learned concerning the cause and nature of the decline of Buddhism throughout the country. The process, whatever it may have been, seems to have been very quiet and to have attracted but little attention. No doubt the movement was extremely slow, and this will probably account for the fact that no startling incidents such as great battles, changes of dynasties, or other important

political events accompanied the movement. Very possibly it was brought about by the agency of those Indian princes who succeeded the ones who had favored the movements in its earliest stages. It is not difficult to understand how such a change might have taken place with comparatively little observation. The Buddhists were warlike enough at some periods of their rule, but this would seem to have been the exception with them. Their opponents, on the other hand, were thoroughly organized, full of bitter enmity, eager to regain their lost ground, and selfishly aware that their personal interests were at stake on the issue. It seems exceedingly unfortunate that so promising a movement should have been so completely overthrown and even all traces of it removed, but no doubt if all the facts could be brought to light it would become clearly apparent that Buddhism at its best was not the system which Providence designed for the permanent deliverance of India from tyranny and misrule, or for the upbuilding of all Southern Asia into an empire mighty enough to be worthy of the name, and capable of

proving a blessing to its own people, and in a large measure to the whole Asiatic world.

To give a complete sketch of the popular worship of the present day would lead to a repetition of some previous paragraphs, but let it suffice to say that the Hindu utterly denies that he worships the visible object as such, but insists that it is God in the idol. At this point their pantheistic notions come to their help. The first Hindu whom the writer ever questioned on the subject was standing in front of his own little temple in full view of a hideous idol within. When asked why he worshiped such an object he replied that his views and mine were identical, but that as God was everywhere he was, of course, in the idol. Popular pantheism had taken full possession of his mind, and yet he was quite unwilling to join in the worship of the one omnipresent God unless the intervening object set apart for that purpose served to concentrate his thoughts and aid his attempts at devotion. In one form or another through the long course of years which have passed, the writer has heard the soph-

istical statement repeated hundreds and hundreds of times. It ought not to confuse the reasoning of a child, but as a matter of fact it serves to satisfy the minds of many millions.

The ordinary mode of worship of a Hindu is simple enough. He goes to the little temple nearest his home, or perhaps to the small shrine enclosing some idol, and presents his offering, such as it may be—a flower or a little meal, a small coin or some other article of slight value; he next bows or prostrates himself before the idol, then rises and retires. Possibly some Brahman attendant may sprinkle a little water on him, but in most cases the worship is complete when the above slight form of service has been carried out. In no case, however, is there any prayer offered. In some instances the service may be more elaborate, and the devotee may repeat some sacred words of devout adoration, *but in no case is there any prayer*. It is difficult to make Christians in America understand this. Prayer, in the Christian sense of the word, is distinctly a Christian exercise. *Prayer is talking with God*. Many Chris-

tians fail to comprehend this definition, and we surely should not wonder that the Hindus wholly fail to comprehend it. The tendency to drift into cold formality when engaging in the worship of God, seems to be inherent in human nature, and can therefore by no means be put down either to the credit or discredit of any particular race.

Hinduism as a system is undoubtedly losing ground to-day. Many marked indications of decay have been noted by close students of the system, but it is too soon for anyone to assume that it is in a moribund state. It is still the religion of nearly two hundred million people, vast multitudes of whom are devout adherents to their faith. Though most people believe it is waning, it still confronts the missionary and the reformer at every step. At some points reforms may be noticed, while at others heresies of many kinds are disturbing the surface of portions of society. Like the almost endless variations of calm and storm in the ocean, so the great mass of Hindu humanity is losing ground at some points, is disturbed by reform move-

ments at others, is threatened by permanent defeat at still other points, and yet those who are most hopeful for the future must learn to wait patiently until the various agencies now at work produce results deeper and more widespread than any which have yet been witnessed.

Several reform movements among the Hindus have attracted much attention during the past thirty or forty years. The most prominent of these is that known as the Brahmo-Samaj, founded originally by Ram Mohan Roy, but best known by its greatest leader, Keshub Chunder Sen. This gentleman was an eloquent speaker both in English and his native tongue, and in character possessed many qualities which belong to the reformer. At times he seemed to approach very near to an open avowal of the Christian faith, but his death at an early age disappointed the hopes of his friends, while dissensions in the ranks of his followers caused a severe check to the development of the movement.

A somewhat similar movement, though on a far smaller scale, has occurred in

Bombay, while still a third movement popularly known as the Arya-Somaj, has attracted much attention in North India. It does not seem possible, however, that reform movements which stop short of a full and complete acceptance of Christianity will ever secure a strong grasp on the people of the country, or lead to permanent improvement.

It remains only to notice Mohammedanism among the great religious powers recognized at the present time in India. This violent and intolerant form of faith entered India in the wake of conquering armies in the eleventh century. No doubt the invaders of that day were devout followers of the Arabian Prophet, and, as a rule, they carried with them religious leaders who were reserved expressly for the work of teaching and otherwise directing the multitudes who were induced either by fear or hope of reward or preferment to accept the new faith which was thus summarily thrust upon them. The Hindus, as is well known, made a stout and even desperate resistance to the invaders, but for the most part in vain. Various artifices were employed to induce the people to



accept the new faith, especially that of offering employment to those classes who could best serve the purposes of the Tartar invaders. Thus the work went on, making steady progress, until Baber, the first Moghul emperor, laid the foundations of a power which in the time of Akhbar attained a position of power and glory which made it renowned the world over. At that period it seemed safe to assume that the Mohammedans could meet with no check until all Asia should be overrun with their victorious armies, but from the very first the Moghul dynasty revealed elements of weakness which at a comparatively early day led to its overthrow, and with this fall of the imperial power the aggressive faith of Islam seemed to lose much of its vitality. In more recent years a movement sometimes spoken of as a revival of Mohammedanism has been at work in some parts of North India. In remote country districts also, a steady work of proselyting is going on among the ignorant and wretchedly poor peasantry especially in the more backward rural districts of Bengal. On the other hand, conversions to the ranks of Christianity from the followers of Islam,

although not numerous, are yet slowly increasing, and some eminent preachers have been received from their ranks, especially in North India.

Before dismissing the subject of religion it may be well to call attention to the number and extraordinary character of the various forms of asceticism which prevail among the people. The ascetics themselves are objects of devout veneration on the part of most devout Hindus, and they in turn adopt their mode of life and practice their austerities from religious motives. These motives are manifold and often difficult to understand, but in all cases seem to be more or less connected with religious considerations. All the world has heard of the men who hold up their arm, or in some cases both arms, until the joints become rigid, and the muscles shrunk beyond all hope of recovery. Men of this type are not often met at the present time, but when they appear devout Hindus offer them tokens of veneration, and sometimes prostrate themselves at full length at their feet.

But all men of this class are by no means honest or sincere. Many are im-

postors and thoroughly bad men. But no degree of badness seems to deprive them of the veneration of the multitude, or to suggest any question concerning the merit or demerit of the whole system of pious mendicancy. It is true that among the lower and more ignorant classes this kind of life is frequently given up for a time and sometimes resumed again, but this does not often occur in cases where a long course of initiation has been followed, and where a devotee has reached a stage where his reputation for sanctity has a practical value to its possessor.

The worship of religious devotees seems to have a strong fascination or drawing of some kind in the minds of the people, and the practice is so common that it may be fairly placed in the list of religious beliefs, or forms of worship, known and recognized among the Indian people. It need hardly be added that the practice is degrading and misleading on the part of the worshipers, and utterly ruinous to rectitude of character on the part of the devotees.

## CHAPTER VI.

### MISSIONARY WORK.

FOR a hundred years India has been known as the chief mission field of the world. A little more than a century ago almost the entire world was closed against the missionary. The few people who were accessible to him, such as the inhabitants of lonely islands in distant seas, and the scattered tribes of American Indians, did not give any promise of success on a scale which would impress the world. God's call to the Churches began to be recognized here and there, but not by any means generally, until it became manifest that the settlements of the English in Bengal were to be permanent, and that the expansion of their authority was likely to continue at least for many years. When in addition to this fact, it also became evident that missionary work would be tolerated, if not actively protected, leading Christians in all

Protestant lands quickly perceived that God's hand was directing the movements of the period in such a way as to make missionary work possible on a wider scale than had ever been seen before. This led to the opening of the period of Carey and Heber, of Judson and Newell, of Coke and Duff, and the long list of noble men and women who bore aloft the missionary banner during the early years of the last century.

At the beginning of the century many fields attracted attention, and men of courage and devotion went forth to Africa and Greenland, and to lonely isles of the sea, but before long it became evident that the time had not fully come for a world-wide crusade, and that the first great advance would have to be concentrated on the vast field in Southern Asia which God was so strangely opening to his servants under the Protestant flags of England, Denmark and Holland. To this field nearly all the Churches of the Protestant world have been sending their messengers, especially in recent years, and although China may before very long take precedence among all the

great mission fields of the world, yet for the present India, with a Christian government, with full religious liberty, and free access to every part of the Empire, must inevitably continue to maintain her position in the van of the united missionary host of our world. In view of this impending responsibility every disciple of our common Master should take pains to understand the task which God is setting before his people. Various questions have already suggested themselves to the reader such as these: What constitutes missionary labor? Does it consist of preaching alone, or of teaching also? Does teaching consist of instruction given in schools, or does it include industrial training? What about theological instruction? About literature? Do the people need to be taught the elements of modern civilization? How is a literature to be created? What about medical instruction? In short, many questions of this kind present themselves, and other questions will doubtless arise as the work advances.

All parties agree that preaching should be the chief agency of the missionary, but

the term "preaching" must be taken in a very broad sense in a modern mission field. The formal services with which people are familiar in Christian lands are simply impossible among half-taught people in a heathen land. It is thought by not a few who have given attention to the subject, that the missionaries in India and the Orient generally have valued the style which prevails in the Western world too highly. We should all remember that the preaching of our Savior affords a better pattern than that with which the world—and especially the Western world—has been familiar since the days of Whitefield and Wesley in England, and of Finney and Edwards in America. We forget that our Savior Himself was an Oriental preacher. His style of discourse was supremely lofty, and withal wonderfully simple. His two most memorable discourses were delivered while He was seated on the ground. Thus far, the native preachers of India have too closely followed the style of their missionary leaders, but here and there a marked tendency to return to Oriental methods has attracted notice. The wayside

teachings of our Savior are worthy of far more attention than they have received. Perhaps the weakest point in our Western usage is the notion that to be able to give a discourse of any importance, a somewhat large audience is necessary. This unfortunate notion is sometimes painfully illustrated in the homeland, where a preacher meeting a small congregation is apt to leave out portions of his sermon, assuming that a mere handful of hearers do not merit as full a discussion as a larger audience. An Indian missionary has called attention to the fact that many converts are won in village communities by simple men seated under trees, or in some place of village resort, and conversing in an informal manner with friends and neighbors gathered around them. Informal conversation carried on by a man who recognizes his responsibility as one speaking in the name of his Master, must ever prove a very efficient means of reaching the hearts and minds of the masses of the people of the East.

Teaching as well as preaching is an essential part of missionary work, and has



been since the time of William Carey. It is not necessary, however, to establish a school in order to teach pupils the rudiments of religious knowledge. The chief object is to secure the attention and training of the young, at an age when their minds can be impressed most effectively. Nearly all Indian missionaries have to a greater or less extent adopted a policy of maintaining mission schools. Though the wisdom of this policy has repeatedly been challenged, yet no common policy has been reached. Perhaps at the present time the majority have either already adopted, or wish to adopt, the policy of educating the Christian youths in preference to all others, but also to admit non-Christian children if they wish to enter on the same terms as the Christians. It is probable that in the early future the Christian community will increase to such an extent that the question will settle itself. In other words, there will be so many Christians thronging the schools that no room will be found for others.

Another phase of the educational question is that of the rival claims of primary

and higher education. Some missionaries of experience advocate the policy of providing primary schools alone, while others think that the ultimate benefit of a Christian education upon a whole community will be greater if fewer students are educated, but these few thoroughly prepared for wide influence in later life. Much may be said on each side of the question, but it is undoubtedly true that the few Christians who have thus far risen to prominence in the land are exerting a very marked influence for good among the natives, and are doing very much indeed to commend the Christian religion to their countrymen, and must prove a very great blessing to all classes.

Theological schools have been brought forward in recent years as an agency deserving the most cordial support of the different missionary societies, and are much needed, especially in view of the rapid growth of the Christian community. This term, however, is one which requires definition. It may certainly be doubted whether theological schools formed on the somewhat rigid pattern of similar institutions

in England and America can supply the kind of training which is needed by Oriental men and women. The tendency mentioned above of desiring to follow very closely in the footsteps of the foreign missionaries is a natural one, and in view of the high respect which the average native of India feels for the foreign teacher, it seems to become almost inevitable. Here and there institutions of high grade might be of use, but they should in every case be conducted in careful accordance with a determination not to follow foreign ideals too closely.

The reader in America can hardly conceive—much less understand—the situation in which a thousand, or perhaps several thousand, simple villagers are suddenly brought within the pale of the Christian Church. Their religious ideals are most elementary. Their very instincts prompt them to follow closely the examples within their reach, and hence their teachers occupy a position of supreme importance. They can be very easily misled, and hence all possible care should be taken to familiarize them with the leading truths of the

Christian faith, and to avoid all questions which are apt to raise doubts in their minds, or suggest problems which the intellects can not fathom.

In recent years much attention has been given to the subject of industrial training for young Christians in India. The need of such training can be seen at a glance, but when the practical question of undertaking the task comes up, it is quickly discovered that it is beset with difficulties. Work of all kinds is so extremely cheap in India, that at best it is quite difficult to compete in the general market, even though the products of the workshop may be better than those in general use. In order to secure purchasers the articles should not only be of higher value, but also be furnished at a rate which in America would seem merely nominal. In orphanages, and special schools organized for the purpose, something has been done, and many earnest men and women are studying the subject, but it is too soon yet to speak with confidence of the practical value of such enterprises. In God's good time some way out will be found from the

difficulties which just now seem to be inseparable from the task. The subject is worthy of much serious thought, but in the limited pages of this booklet more space can not be afforded it.

At an early day the idea was suggested to friends of missions that medical skill might be used to unlock the doors which so often are closed against the foreign missionary. Some of the very first missionaries were medical men. In a general way it might be said that in no case does this kind of service absolutely fail, though like many other good things it has its limitations. A medical man can not do satisfactory work unless he devotes his entire time to his calling. Missionaries of this class are sometimes heard to express their regret that they ever studied medicine, and explain that the "doctor invariably swallows up the missionary," and that while their medical practice enables them to enter closed doors, it also adds to their responsibilities, and keeps them from the spiritual work which their hearts prompt them to undertake. Perhaps it would be a wise policy for every medical missionary to have

a lay colleague who could follow up the spiritual openings which occur, and thus relieve his medical brother from his embarrassment.

In the case of lady doctors the situation is somewhat different. These valued workers have fewer claims apart from the specific tasks connected with their profession. They are not expected to preach or take charge of schools, although in a very real sense they may be said to perform pastoral duties among those women who are not accessible to the male missionary. Medical women of this class have certainly accomplished much good, and have been led out into broader fields than those of which they dreamed before going to the mission field. An illustration of this occurs in the case of Miss Clara A. Swain, M. D., the first medical lady to enter a foreign missionary field. Dr. Swain was sent out to India in 1870 by the newly organized Woman's Foreign Missionary Society. It seems almost incredible that at so late a day she became the pioneer of a movement which now spreads to some extent all over the heathen world. Many doubted the wisdom of the

experiment at the time—for it was an experiment—but her success surpassed all expectations. She was not only received with kindness, but in some cases with enthusiasm, and lived to become the pioneer not only of women's medical practice in India, but of medical instruction to the women of the soil, and in a few years the Government of India became so interested in the movement, and so well satisfied with the success which had attended it, that an order was issued opening the great medical colleges of the Empire to men and women on equal terms.

It remains to notice the result of higher education among the women and girls of India. It was only about the middle of the last century that the thought occurred to any one that an effort should be made to provide at least the elements of education for the women of India. A few attempts had been made, especially in Calcutta, but the utmost that was hoped for was that the people might be willing to have their daughters educated in the simple elements of a primary education. In 1870 Miss Isabella Thoburn went out to India with a special

conviction that her work was to be chiefly the promotion of higher education among women and girls. It so happened that Dr. Swain and Miss Thoburn went out on the same ship, sent out by the same organization, and each was the pioneer of a great work. Miss Thoburn's success was complete, although it took some time to work out a visible result. She lived to found the first Christian college for women ever erected, not only in India, but anywhere on Asiatic soil. Other similar institutions are following, and the possibilities for a woman to secure a higher education are now established beyond doubt.

Very naturally supporters of foreign missions in England and America will ask how long their support must continue. Will the native Churches of India ever reach a point at which they will become so independent as to require no further assistance from without? What is the present measure of their ability to support pastors taken from their own class, and living among them as pastors do elsewhere? To answer this question plainly, there must first be a statement made as to the con-



dition of the average Christian community in countries like India and China. The poor people who so largely constitute our membership in these lands are more than willing to do their whole duty, but most missionaries shrink from laying upon them any burden which involves even the smallest gift of money. A laboring man earns five or six cents a day, his wife possibly as much more, and children of working age also earn a trifle, but the parents are not always able to secure steady work. Prices fluctuate, and the support for one year may not suffice for another; sickness and trouble of various kinds may also fall to their lot. Yet in many cases the native pastor is supported by people whose income is almost incredibly small. In some cases women have been known to cast their flimsy ornaments on the collecting plate, and also take the rings from their fingers and toes for the same purpose. Now and then, but very rarely, a lady's ring may be found on a collecting plate in an American Church, but so far as the spirit of giving is concerned, the Indian sister has perhaps

the more willing spirit of the two. It certainly can not be laid to the charge of the poor Christians of India that they do not possess a willing spirit, when the duty of giving is presented to them.

## CHAPTER VII.

### METHODIST MISSIONS IN INDIA.

THE Methodists of England promptly joined in the movement which followed the enterprise of Dr. Carey, and in the year 1815 Dr. Thomas Coke and a party of young men sailed from England for service in Ceylon and South India. Dr. Coke had already done service in America and the West Indies, and was full of missionary spirit, and qualified in many respects for the leadership of such a movement as he wished to inaugurate in India, but he was in advanced years, and therefore unfitted for the hardships of the missionary service of that time. Before reaching India he was one morning found dead in his cabin, and the party of young men had to proceed to their field and enter upon their work without their leader. They planted missions both in Ceylon and on the mainland, and were joined from time to

time by able and devoted comrades, the most prominent of whom was the well-known William Arthur, while R. Spence Hardy and Daniel Gogerly attained eminence in the line of Oriental scholarship. However, the Wesleyans did not for many years extend their work into other parts of India, nor did they succeed in achieving marked success within the boundaries of the fields to which they had been assigned. Their work was thorough, and their foundation well laid.

The American Methodists were very slow in entering upon the foreign missionary movement, for it was not until the year 1856 that they sent forth their first missionary to India. Their pioneer was the well-known Dr. William Butler. He was given instructions to establish a compact mission field in some part of North India, the definite plan of the Missionary Society being that of selecting a field large enough for twenty-five men only, a number which was considered large in that day of small things. The field chosen consisted of the small province of Rohilkhund, together with half of the adjacent province of Oudh,

the whole field being not so large in area as the State of Indiana. Reinforcements were sent out to the pioneer, and an encouraging beginning was made, but it so happened that the great Indian mutiny broke out only a few months after his arrival, and he was compelled to flee for refuge to Naini Tal, in the lower Himalayas. When the worst of the storm was over his two colleagues, who had reached Calcutta and stayed there during the mutiny, came up and joined him, and as soon as it was considered safe they all repaired to their stations at Lucknow and Bareilly.

Early in 1859 six additional missionaries reached the field, and in September the first formal "Annual Meeting" of the Mission was held at Lucknow. Twelve missionaries were present, including three Englishmen who had joined Dr. Butler in India, and also one native preacher named Joel Janvier, who had come to Dr. Butler from the American Presbyterians at Allahabad. At that stage of missionary progress this little band of thirteen workers seemed like a vigorous—and in a sense a vast—army. The spirit maintained by these men was in

some respects remarkable. They talked and planned together as if they were already sharing a part in a great work. They boldly asked the authorities in America to organize them into an Annual Conference, with all the rights and privileges pertaining to such a body. They assumed at the very outset that they were about to enter upon a very great work, and so little did they conceal either their hopes or their assurance of success, that some friends in America thought it prudent to remind them that they were as yet living in a day of small things, and were perhaps tempted to look too far into the future. It always happens when a new mission is founded in a country where the people speak a strange language and follow a strange religion, that much weary delay must occur and many discouragements and disappointments be endured. Nor did these new missionaries prove an exception to this rule. Meanwhile the Civil War broke out at home, and for a time it seemed impossible for them to remain at their posts, but they were so nobly sustained by the Missionary Society that they not only held their own

ground, but received reinforcements enough to double the number of American missionaries on the field before the conclusion of the war.

In the year 1864, to the very great surprise of many leading men in America, the General Conference gave the missionaries in India an Annual Conference organization. This was considered a most extraordinary step at the time, but events have proved its wisdom, while the precedent thus formed has been followed to great advantage in the other mission fields of the Church. The work moved on, converts were gradually gathered around the missionaries, native preachers were raised up, schools and orphanages established, but almost twenty years elapsed before the increase of converts began to attract attention. It was once remarked by an eminent orator that experience was the only lamp by which his feet were guided, and this remark holds true to a very great extent in foreign missions. But many missionaries have no experience by which their feet may be guided except their own; they are working under new conditions, they are

walking in untrodden paths, and thus, of course, are obliged to become their own teachers in acquiring many of the most important lessons of life.

Some movements during the years 1874-5 gave rise to a conviction on the part of some leading missionaries that God had a wider work for the Methodist Episcopal Church in India than had been contemplated by the good men who first laid out plans for the work. It was the universal custom for all the missionary societies then operating in India to lay down fixed boundaries for their fields, and it was understood that all missionaries would respect these boundary lines, at least to a reasonable extent. Here and there when an effort had sometimes been made to change some boundary lines a little friction had been reported, sometimes on the part of one mission and again on the part of another, but the fact that such an uncertainty existed made it difficult for our missionaries to act freely, and some even went so far as to object to any extension of boundary lines whatever. The rule, however, had never been enforced with reference to work



among Europeans in the country, and as a large number of these people were found scattered all over the Empire, our missionaries, following the precedents and instinct which had always characterized their brethren in all parts of the globe, had gone freely to minister to all persons who spoke the English language, and who were not otherwise supplied with gospel preaching. God blessed these efforts, and calls from various places began to reach the missionaries. In the meantime, in the providence of God William Taylor reached India on one of his great tours, and, not knowing any native language, very naturally began to preach wherever he went in English. God blessed the Word from his lips, and many were converted. In some places Methodist Churches were organized, and almost before they knew it the missionaries found that their Church was represented by zealous Christian believers in Western and Southern India, as well as in Bengal. It seemed unreasonable to hold aloof from these Churches, especially as they asked to be incorporated in the common body, and eagerly sought to be provided with the

oversight on which all Methodist Churches depend. In this unlooked for way our little work in Rohilkhund and Oudh expanded until it reached not only all parts of the great Indian Empire, but also extended its influence far down the Malay Peninsula to the great city of Singapore.

This vast extension of our work only served to deepen the conviction of our leaders in India that an organization adapted to the new work should be perfected so as to meet all requirements in cases of emergency. Experience had amply proved that it was altogether impossible to refer all questions to parties living on the other side of the globe. Appeals which were made were sometimes neglected, sometimes misunderstood, and at best seldom met with satisfactory treatment. A representative body of missionaries met at Allahabad in 1879, and asked the General Conference to authorize the organization of a Central Conference, having jurisdiction over all general interests in India. This request was a bold one, and created no little disquiet in the minds of many leading men at home. When first presented to

the General Conference it failed to receive its approval. Many matters had to be explained, many objections made and answered, and not a few changes inserted in the proposed plan, but finally in 1884 the General Conference authorized the organization of such a body, to be known as the Central Conference in Southern Asia.

About the year 1888 it began to be noticed that a new spirit of inquiry was manifesting itself among the large body of people composing what are known as the "depressed classes." These people do not form a single class or caste, but are divided into different castes, or sub-castes, according to the part of the country in which they live, and the occupations in which they engage. Mentally and physically most of them compare favorably with those who occupy a higher social position, and experience has thus far proved that with fair opportunities they can rise steadily and somewhat rapidly in the social scale. Under various names, and subject to various conditions, an immense proportion of the people of India belong to these depressed classes, and it is evident at a glance that

India can never become Christian in any true sense until the millions of these lowly people are reached and rescued from their low estate.

It was among these people that the new spirit of inquiry first appeared, and it soon became apparent that it was not only widespread, but had many signs of permanence. Converts multiplied, and inquirers were reported from far and near. For the first time in the history of the mission baptisms began to be numbered by the thousand, and so great was the success in some quarters that prudent men began to doubt the genuineness of the work, but as time passed it became evident that whatever elements of weakness there might be in the movement, God's hand was manifestly directing it.

Perhaps the best result of this movement was the new spirit which was breathed into the native Christians. They seemed to be touched with a new inspiration. They were moved by what has been called "the instinct of victory." They joyously accepted the spirit of self-sacrifice. Many of them preached with power. The American brethren saw the need of a larger staff

of ordained men, and although the Annual Conference, held in Bareilly in January, 1889, rejoiced greatly when ten men stood up together and were ordained to the Christian ministry, yet only three years later no less than *fifty-three* were ordained at a session of the same Conference, held at the same place. It soon became necessary to organize a second Conference in Northwest India, where the good work spread with even greater rapidity and over a wider territory. Later still, a similar movement began among the people known as Gujaratis, living in the region north of Bombay, where many thousands were gathered into the Church and many valuable recruits found for the Christian ministry.

But our successful work has been by no means confined to the above named regions. With the progress of the work it has been found necessary to increase the number of Conferences from one to nine. One of these lies for the most part among the forests and remote people of Central India. One includes the once remote State of Burma, the region made famous by the labors and sufferings of the Judsons. One

embraces the Malay Peninsula, and the great tropical islands of Borneo, Java, and Sumatra; while still another includes within its boundary lines the now famous group of islands known as the Philippines.

The writer of these lines joined the India Mission in 1859, at which time the boundaries of the Mission were strictly limited to the small section of country in North India mentioned on a preceding page. Converts were received from the first, but in such limited numbers that nearly thirty years elapsed before the encouraging progress of the work in North India began to attract notice. From this time forward its progress was extremely promising, and a new spirit seemed to animate the whole Christian community. Questions and criticisms were heard concerning the soundness of the conversions reported, but the missionaries seldom paused to defend their course, which they believed to be a plan of God's direction. In the following years the progress has not been uniform, but when the results are tabulated, and due allowance made for the fact that all progress in heathen lands must necessarily be slow,

the latest statistics are not only satisfactory, but in some respects surprising. For instance in 1859 the number of communicants, including probationers, was *thirteen*, while to-day they number over 125,000. The total Christian community is more than 175,000, while other advance movements are reported from different points in the wide field. Other doors are opening—more doors indeed than we can hope to enter for many years. Barriers which for long years seemed immovable are breaking down and disappearing, tokens for good are graciously given us day by day, and all the workers are full of good cheer and faith in the future.

In this rapid sketch no attempt has been made to tell the story of our expansion from point to point, until at last our vast field is spoken of officially, not as India, but as “Southern Asia.” The first advance beyond the bounds of India proper was into Burma, where our banner was planted in the city of Rangoon in the year 1879. There, as in so many other places, the work was commenced among the Europeans who had heard of our work in Cal-

cutta, and had invited us to come to them. Success attended this effort, and in the course of a two weeks' stay there a firm foundation was laid for the future work of our Church in that part of the world. Preaching was commenced in three different languages, and property secured, and arrangements made for a permanent occupation of the field. Our work there has had its share of the vicissitudes which attend missionary labors everywhere, but it has had a very satisfactory measure of success. A Conference has been organized, and work is carried on not only among the Indian settlers, but also among the Burmese themselves, who until very recently were considered extremely inaccessible, but are now evincing an interest in the work which is most encouraging.

The next advance to the distant city of Singapore, was in some respects the most singular enterprise undertaken by our Church in that part of the globe. The city is very nearly two thousand miles distant from Calcutta. We had no one to invite us there, and our first missionaries were obliged to go among complete strangers,



but special tokens of God's favor were soon given them, and a foothold secured which has expanded into a well organized Annual Conference. Bishop Oldham was the pioneer in this movement, and the interesting story of his successful movements there in building a church and large school has frequently been told. Singapore is now the center of the work done by that Conference, which has missionaries or other workers farther up at Penang, and at several points of the Malay Peninsula, as well as on the great islands of Borneo, Java, and Sumatra.

But the most striking result of our entrance and occupation of Malaysia has been seen in the providential opening of the door to the Philippines. When our missionaries first went to Singapore they learned that all the islands in that vast region were open to them except this group. The Spaniards had from the first forbidden the entry of any missionaries except Roman Catholics, and it was well understood everywhere in the East that their rule was extremely rigid, and would not be relaxed in the slightest degree under any circumstances. On this

account our missionaries in Singapore felt a peculiar interest in the Philippines, and from the first some of them prayed daily that in some way God would break down the barrier of centuries, and throw the doors of those beautiful islands open to all disciples of our common Master who might wish to labor there. This faith was so strong that when the second day of May, 1898, brought the news of Admiral Dewey's victory at Manila, their surprise was not unmingled with a realization that the long continued prayers had been answered.

The Missionary Society lost no time in sending a messenger to investigate the opportunities of opening up work there. The story of our entry can not be inserted here, but suffice it to say that no mission of our Church to Roman Catholics has met with a success at all commensurate with that achieved in the Philippines in these few years. The work is still new, the dangers have been many and severe in character, but nevertheless the missionaries on the field report a Church membership, including probationers, of over 17,000, while the body of adherents is estimated at a much larger

figure. The people are hungry for the Word of truth, and there seems to be no limit to the possibilities set before our missionaries, provided they can be supported with reinforcements and a moderate appropriation of funds.\*

To sum up: God has given our people a great work to do in Southern Asia. The more the situation is studied, the more amazing does the progress appear. Our missionaries began by preaching in a single native language, but they are now preaching in at least *thirty-seven different tongues*. And yet it must be constantly remembered that in this great field, as in China and elsewhere, the work is only in its beginning. It must finally assume proportions, the very mention of which now would be bewildering. It can not be repeated too often that the project even in its simplest terms surpasses in magnitude anything of the kind which has ever been attempted before, for indeed it embraces the human race!

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\*The story of our work in Malaysia, including the Philippines, has been written by Bishop Oldham, and will soon be published.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### CHRISTIAN INDIA.

WILL India ever become Christian? Some good people doubt it, chiefly because of peculiar views of prophecy; but on the other hand, a great multitude of spiritually minded Christians confidently affirm their belief and expectation that India with her teeming millions will in the fullness of God's time be given to the Eternal Son for His inheritance. To this grand consummation all things seem to be tending, and He with whom nothing is impossible assuredly seems to be preparing the way for greater achievements than any seen in past ages, and victories are reported which seem to portend the final triumph which shall give India an inheritance and a name among the Christian nations of the earth. When India becomes Christian, what will be the condition of her people? Will they remain poor, and live constantly on the ragged

edge of starvation? Will life continue to be one long struggle against grinding poverty and many forms of injustice and wrong? Will they live in mud huts and see their children grow up in ignorance, and exposed to the blighting influence of bad customs and bad associations?

No, the future of Christian India will be unlike her past in many ways. In the first place, the nations which fear God and keep His commandments do not, and can not, continue to live in a state of permanent depression. An eternal law of God makes this impossible. The poverty of the world may be traced to sin, but never to righteousness. The good and holy are sometimes poor to human seeing, as the Master Himself was, but there is such a thing as having nothing and yet possessing all things. Christian India will not be poor in the ordinary sense of the word. The acceptance of Christ will place them under the care of Him who once fed starving multitudes and who now provides for starving nations.

Christian India will be the home of an intelligent people. There is no defect in

the Indian brain. So far from it, in fair competition the Indian youth contests successfully with the youth of his own age from the British Isles, and can compete under fair conditions with young men of his own age from any country in the world. If these youths can do this now in the face of the disadvantages under which they have grown up, how much more certainly will they succeed in that brighter day when they are freed from the disabilities which heathenism imposes.

Christian India will hold an honorable place among the nations of the earth. In that better day when all nations flow together; i. e., mingle and commingle to an extent never yet seen, the people of India will profit by their wider associations and lose some peculiarities which sometimes affect strangers unfavorably. But no one must too readily assume that all the giving must be one-sided—that, for instance, Europe has as much to give, but needs nothing for herself in return. Such an assumption would be a very mistaken one. India, and for that matter all the nations of Asia, can place Europe under obligations of many

kinds. What does not Europe owe to Asia? For uncounted centuries Europe occupied the less favored position, and but for the older continent her barbarism might have continued for many long and weary centuries—perhaps to the present day. At this late day it does not become any people to boast too freely of either their lineage or history.

Speculative thinkers often give themselves needless trouble in wondering what the fate of the race will be when the earth no longer yields enough food for the people living on its surface, but all such fears are groundless. Through a long course of years new sources of supply have been discovered as needed, and we may well trust that in coming years other sources will be found sufficient for every emergency. In this connection the experiments of Mr. Burbank suggest in a most striking manner that the one peril which the human race has least need to fear, is that of the race perishing for the want of food.

Let India be brought to Christ, and her future is assured for all the years to come. When she takes her place among the Chris-

tian family of nations God will bless her, and the eternal laws of nature, as well as the laws of grace, will begin to act in her favor, and thus her long and weary struggle against the powers of evil will end in a glorious release, and a new career of prosperity and peace.













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